

State of California
Department of Transportation

SCH #
11-SD-188
KP 0.0/0.5
(PM 0.0/0.3)
EA 256500

PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) propose a Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Facility (CVEF) and intersection improvements at State Route 188 (SR-188) and Thing Road, in the community of Tecate, adjacent to the United States (US) International Port of Entry Inspection Facility (POE). The work would be located just north of the Mexico/ United States of America international border.

This project would provide the following: an improved permanent inspection facility for commercial vehicles entering the state of California and operational improvements at the intersection of SR-188 and Thing Road. The proposed CVEF would be a Class C, operating eight hours a day five days a week, with an estimated daily volume of 778 trucks for the year. Class C is a terminology derived from the *2001 Weigh Station Inventory of Needs*, prepared by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) in cooperation with Caltrans, which provides a detailed explanation on vehicle inspection facilities throughout the state; this report is on file at the Caltrans District-11 office, San Diego. The Class A facilities are the largest and most comprehensive to Class F the smallest and least complex. The project would allow for additional agencies, increased staffing at this POE, increased national security of incoming vehicles, and full implementation of NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement), which would allow Mexican commercial vehicles to travel throughout the US. This facility would require building sizes that are customarily used for Class A facilities. The facility would include an inspection bay, buildings, storage area for seized trucks, increased routing lanes for commercial vehicles, and employee facilities.

Two Alternatives have been considered for the proposed project, including a No Action or "No Build" alternative. Alternative project features are shown on Figures 1.3-a, b, & c. Three additional alternatives were considered but were determined to be impractical in satisfying the project's purpose and need. In addition, to the proposed CVEF there would operational improvements at the intersection of SR-188 and Thing Road. These improvements were deemed necessary due to non-standard intersection turning radii's after the addition of the fourth leg to the intersection that was added by General Services Administration (GSA) Port of Entry (POE) Inspection facility project.

Determination

This proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is included to give notice to interested agencies and the public that it is Caltrans' intent to adopt an MND for this project. This does not mean that Caltrans' decision regarding the project is final. This MND is subject to modification based on comments received by interested agencies and the public.

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project, and pending public review, expects to determine from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

1. The proposed project would have no effect on floodplain, parklands, wetlands, air traffic, noise, paleontology, invasive species, stream channel modification, housing and timber.
2. In addition, the project would have no significant effect on plant and animal species, endangered species, air quality, land uses, population characteristics, special interest groups, cultural resources, community planning, geology, neighborhoods, public utilities, public facilities, schools, energy, industry, economy, and stream channel modification.
3. The project would have no significantly adverse effects on topography, erosion, water quality, traffic/circulation, visual quality, aesthetics, habitat, business, community impacts, vegetation communities, and hazardous waste/ materials because the following mitigation measures would reduce potential effects to insignificance:
 - A traffic management plan would be developed and implemented during construction.
 - The project would be designed and constructed in conformance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and Caltrans Storm Water Quality Handbook requirements. Temporary Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all five categories below would be implemented in order to avoid and minimize temporary construction impacts to water quality. These include soil stabilization, sediment control, wind erosion, tracking control, non storm water control, and waste management and materials pollution control.
 - Visual impacts resulting from the intersection improvements would be mitigated by the landscaping on the eastern side of SR-188 adjacent to the GSA facility and decorative concrete features within the raised island at the intersection of SR-188 and Thing Road. Planting would contain drought tolerant non-invasive species.
 - Temporarily and Permanently disturbed areas surrounding the CVEF site would be revegetated with a seed mix compatible with native Coastal Sage Scrub to blend in with the surrounding viewshed.
 - Existing Eucalyptus trees would be preserved if feasible. If preservation is not feasible, mature trees would be replaced at a 5:1 ratio with 24" box native oaks planted within the CVEF project site. Temporary irrigation would be provided until the oaks are established (estimated plant establishment would be 5 years).
 - A replacement sign ("Welcome to Tecate" in English and Spanish) would be placed along SR-188 just north of the border crossing to provide an entrance into the United States.

- One business could be relocated as a result of this project. Any acquisitions or relocations that may occur would be subject to the Caltrans' Relocation Assistance Program.
- Increased traffic safety would result from the intersection improvements in sight distance and turning radii at the proposed SR-188 and Thing Road location.
- Pedestrian safety would be increased by American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant ramps and sidewalks being placed on the east and west sides of SR-188.
- Underground Storage Tank (UST) removals and cleanup of residual petroleum hydrocarbons would be required on Parcels A and C as shown on Figure 1.5 Parcel Map.
- If any structures were proposed for demolition, asbestos and lead-based paint surveys would be conducted. If found, a work and safety plan would be developed to ensure protection of workers involved in demolition/ remodeling activities.
- Mitigation for natural habitat impacts would be proposed at a 2:1 ratio for Diegan coastal sage scrub, and a 1:1 ratio for disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub, at the Rancho Jamul Ecological Preserve, totaling 6.14 hectares (15.10 acres)
- Vegetation removal and start of construction will occur outside the flight season of the Quino checkerspot butterfly (February 1- April 30).

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District Director
District 11
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Date